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THE

Comrades.

A MILITARY TALE

OF THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

"There are some subjects on which a writer must decline all attempts to acquire fame, satisfied with being obscurely useful."

GOLDSMITH.

HALIFAX, N. S.

PRINTED BY J. S. CUNNABELL—ARGYLE-STREET.

1835.

THIS TALE IS INSCRIBED

TO

All who approve the Principles

IT IS

MEANT TO ADVOCATE,

BY THEIR HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

APRIL, 1835.

57354

THE COMRADES.

"I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on
The contrary casket; for, if the devil be within, and
That temptation without, I know he will choose it."
SHAKESPEARE.

DURING the fearful struggles of that War, wherein Buonaparte almost attained the object of his gigantic ambition; when all the nations of the Continent were subdued, and the people of the British Isles stood almost alone,—

"Few and faint, but fearless still;"

The Recruiting Drum was heard in every village and hamlet, and the gallant sons of "merry England," answered the call with that enthusiasm which has always baffled her invaders, and so often overthrown her enemies.

In the remote town of Fowey in Cornwall, the annual fair was just at the height of its merriment; and monsters, wild beasts, giants, dwarfs, puppets, and conjurers offered their rival claims to public notice. At the sign of the King's Head in the Market place was the recruiting rendezvous of the gallant **th Regiment. The party consisted of a Serjeant, a Corporal, and two Privates, with a Drum and Fife. On the principal day of the Fair as the clock in the old church struck twelve at noon, Serjeant Bell drew up his Party, and standing before them, unsheathed his sword, and ordered his musicians to strike up "The Three Camps." At this sound the Babel of clamour was hushed for a moment, and the fickle crowd drew round to hear what this new candidate for public

favour had to say for himself;—even the monkey of the beast show ran up his pole to gain a view, and Punch and Judy stopped in the middle of their jig.—The drum beat a quick step, while the fifer puffed and strained until his face became the colour of mahogany. The Serjeant then unrolled a paper printed in red, and blue letters, and read an offer of enlistment into the **th Regiment. This document promised a high bounty and many other things which it avails not now to mention; when the Serjeant had concluded this announcement, which was made in a tone of voice that raised the envy of the Town Crier; he gave a specimen of his own natural eloquence to the following effect; "Look ye my lads, this ere paper "is none of my making; you see it has the printer's name "to it; and the corporal will tell you the same. Now if "any of you have the spirit of a Louse you will not delay "a moment but take the best offer that was ever made in "these parts—Twenty Pound and a Watch.—God save "the King!"

The Drum and Fife then struck up a lively air, and the party marched back to their Rendezvous. Opposite the King's Head stood the shop of an Apothecary, or as he called himself a Doctor of Medicine. His apprentice, and chief, or rather only assistant, was a friendless orphan who had been fixed in service, by a series of events which it is not necessary to our present purpose to relate. The young man looked through the window as the party drew up before the Inn; and as the Drum rolled, and the shrill Fife screamed in accompaniment, he felt a strange swelling in his throat, and his heart beat wild, and quick. He turned from the window, and struck his hand upon the counter, with an emphasis that made the phials and gallipots dance, "I will" said he, speaking aloud, "I will be a Soldier." His master entered at this moment, "Come Claude," said he, "get some lint and plaisters ready, we shall have plenty of broken heads this fair time. What, is not that bolus ready and the powders for the baker's

wife ? Leave your idle gazing and be stirring ; or I fear me you will never make a physician of any eminence." Claude smiled ;

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A few weeks after a party of Recruits mustered before the district Inspector in Westminster. Claude Irvin was among them. He had given up all hope of becoming an eminent Physician, and was waiting for his billet ; he received one on a distant quarter of the city ; and stepped into the sign of the Robin Hood across the way, to wait until some others were ready to accompany him. When he entered the Tap Room, a party was just forming to play cards, "We want a hand said an old dragoon turning round, will you play Johnny ?" "I cannot play," said Claude, "if you mean me." "You *are* a green goose, said the trooper, pray where were you dragged up ? Here take a drop of jackey neat, it will make you as knowing as a jailor, and *I'll teach* you to play cards my fine fellow." Suiting the action to the word, he offered Claude a glass of gin. "No thank you," said the latter. "Why ?" inquired the trooper with a grin ; "Because I do not think it wholesome," said Claude very gravely. This remark caused a hearty laugh at the expense of our hero, who was glad to escape into the street, and pursue his way alone in search of his quarters. As he went along his appearance attracted the notice of more than one of the good folks of London, who look out for strangers with an alertness that does more credit to their diligence, than their motives. His clothes were full of dust, and there was in his appearance that look of wonderment that marks the advent of a country lad into the great capital. Arriving at Blackfriars Bridge, he for the first time in his life saw the dome of St. Paul's ; this building was associated in his mind with all that is grand, and noble, and he bent his steps towards it. When Claude stood under the mighty cupola he was filled with awe ; for there was here a quiet and noiseless repose, so unlike the whirling

hurry of the streets from which he had just emerged. He walked round from tomb to tomb of the illustrious dead, at length he stood before the cenotaph of Nelson. It is surmounted by a statue of the "thin worn man" who lived and died for the glory of old England. While he was gazing on this monument, he was addressed by a tall elderly person attired in a blue frock coat buttoned to the chin. One sleeve looped to his breast, showed that he had lost an arm; his hair was grizzled, and his face weather beaten; but he had still an erect and martial appearance, "Young man," said the veteran, for such he evidently was, "I see by your ribbons, that you are a recruit; receive then a lesson from an old soldier before the tomb of as true hearted an Englishman as ever fought for his country. Remember the words of an old man, who had spent his best days in the service; '*Be true to your colours; Fear God; Honour the King*,' and whether you should be early cut off; or live like me a shattered remnant, you will have the consciousness of doing your duty, and serving the most free, noble, and grateful country in the world." The face of the old man flushed as he proceeded, and as Claude gazed on the monument of the dead Hero and listened to the time worn veteran, his heart dilated with a feeling of pride and satisfaction; he felt that he was a Briton.

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When our friend Claude arrived at Chatham where his regiment was stationed, he was posted to a company, and the old hands (as they termed themselves) though some of them had been enlisted but a short time, gathered round him, and began to ask a variety of questions; "how are you off for soap?" said one of them; "Really I have not got any at all," said Claude, very simply. This reply raised a laugh; and another taking up the joke, asked if he had any *possibles* left. Claude was again at fault for an answer; when a young man came forward, and beckoned him away; as they went aside,

"Ay," said the last speaker, "Harry Ellwood is going to take him for a comrade I suppose." This supposition was correct, and from that moment Irvin and Ellwood were comrades. The new companion of Claude was a general favourite, he was the best singer, the lightest runner, and the neatest dancer in the company. He could also spin yarns—*i. e.* tell stories to admiration; in fact he was what is generally termed, *a very pleasant fellow*. The Regiment was under orders for foreign service, but their destination was as yet unknown. In the mean time they pulled away merrily at every species of amusement that Chatham afforded. The high bounties of those days made the Jews and Vintners of that honest town rejoice in their generation. Ellwood from his social qualities was the soul of every freak that was projected; and Claude saw with regret that he became daily less attentive to his duties.—When remonstrated with he would reply "Ah you are always giving me long lectures; do you think I was brought up moping in a doctor's shop like you, rolling pills, and spreading plasters? If I do not enjoy life now, I cannot when I am old, look at the merry side of a thing,

"If we lead a life of pleasure,
'Tis no matter how or where."

"You know," Claude would say, "I am as much disposed for amusement as you; but there is a limit that should not be passed. Ellwood however continued to indulge in every kind of amusement the town afforded; poor Claude was often left to take his walks by himself; for he could neither drink nor game; and Ellwood was too fond of both to leave them for a walk by the Medway, or to climb the ruins of the old castle.—The time was now fixed for the departure of the Regiment, they were to go to Jamaica; and Ellwood being a native of the weald of Kent, his father and mother came to bid him farewell; a young woman accompanied them; whom he told Claude in confidence was to be his wife, whenever he took it into his head

to marry. "This however cannot be until we return from abroad; if we ever do return," said he. "Ah, and she thinks fit to wait so long," said Claude;—Ellwood looked serious; he had not before thought of the matter in this light, and replied, "It is well for you Claude, you are not troubled with any friends, and have no fear of any woman's inconstancy." The time drew nigh for embarkation; the lots were drawn, to determine the individual women to go; and on the morning of the march for Gravesend, there was not on the whole a happier set of fellows in the British Empire. There were however some sad exceptions; women to be left behind clung to their husbands; others parted from their sweethearts with the love tokens usual on such occasions. Ringlets of hair, thread cases, little boxes, and promises of constancy; these, and all the usual ratifications of the treaties of love, were liberally exchanged. The time of departure was now come. The Regiment was paraded in marching order; the colours were uncased; the bayonets fixed; the band struck up "The Girl I left behind me," and they moved off as gaily, as if not a sad thought was carried with them, or a breaking heart left behind. On the parade was one little group left in deep grief; the father and mother of Ellwood and his betrothed wife Mary. The old man was a fine specimen of a now rapidly decreasing class, the stout yeomanry of England; he was as erect as a pike staff; and as he stood looking at the column partially seen waving and glancing through the clouds of dust; he muttered, "God bless the boy and spare him to me, but I shall be cold in the grave before he comes home again." "Come William," said his wife, as she gently pulled his arm, but he shook his head, and remained still.

There is something in the grief of an old man, that forbids the offer of the usual topics of consolation; Mary turned to him with an entreating look, he covered his face with his hands, and they led him away like a child.

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The Transports that conveyed the **th Regiment proceeded to the Downs to wait for their convoy. In a few days a large fleet was collected; and it was on as fine a morning as ever shone on the white cliffs of Dover, that the commodore hoisted a signal for sea, and fired a gun. Each transport gave three hearty cheers. Claude and Ellwood stood at the gangway of their vessel with very different feelings. The first only saw the white walls of a land where he had left no tie; and before him the wide blue sea over which he had so often longed to wander. But Ellwood thought of his father, and mother, and Mary; and he blubbered like a schoolboy. As the ships gained the open sea, the wind blew fresh, and the deck was soon cleared of the gazing crowd that had so lately filled it; in a few days however the soldiers got their sea legs, and began to pull and haul with right good will. Among other things new to the recruits was the issue of rum as a part of their rations. This liquor bears a high price in England, and is not thought of as a drink among the lower classes; Ellwood seemed to relish the new luxury prodigiously, and it excited his naturally gay temper to a thousand freaks: he sung his best songs, and danced with a degree of agility which made him a prime favourite with the sailors; he was in fact, the life of the forecastle, and Claude was pleased to see him so happy; one fine evening when there had been dancing on the quarter deck together with a variety of tricks and games, Claude saw for the first time that Ellwood was intoxicated. He had been singing and had got drams from various people; he faultered in his gait, and became so vociferous that even those who had given him the liquor, now cursed him for a troublesome fellow; and he was sent below in disgrace. A few days after this Claude saw him listening earnestly to the instructions of an old sailor who was praising the virtues of tobacco. He had just thrust an enormous quid in his mouth, and thus lauded it. "Why, you see, I don't know how a man could well do

without a chaw'r of baccor ; it's the finest thing for the teeth as is, and as for the lowness of spirits after a spree or the like, its better nor a fiddle." Ellwood seemed to approve of these maxims, for he made every effort to learn the accomplishment of smoking, and after being made very sick several times he accomplished his purpose, to the great annoyance of Claude ; whose natural aversion to this idle habit was much increased by this circumstance. Claude about this time got a few sheets of paper from the ship's steward, and commenced keeping a journal of the voyage, few things happened worth recording and he got on but slowly. When the men sat in the forecastle on fine evenings they told a variety of stories under the general name of yarns, under this term is comprehended every thing in the shape of a story, whether true or false, sad or merry, long or short.—Claude found himself deficient in this species of time killing ; and he therefore determined to *write* a story. An event that came to his knowledge a short time before his departure from England furnished him with incidents, and he had a glimmering hope that he might thus produce an effect on Ellwood, who was daily acquiring an increased love for ardent spirits. The story went on slowly, for many casualties attended it ; when half finished he forgot it in one of the boats, and the pigs which were kept there trod the manuscript to pieces. When still nearer its completion, the water broke over head where he was writing and drenched the paper, so that when dried at the galley fire none but the author himself could have succeeded in an attempt to read it ; it was however finished in a few days in spite of wind and weather ; and when they were all seated in their *Athenæum* in the forecastle, Claude produced his journal and read the following Tale:

THE SONS OF APOLLO.

Respice Finem.

"Italy may be the land of palaces, but England is the land of cottages : that in which our story opens was in

the vicinity of London, its beauty and neatness would have done honor to much richer persons than its present possessors—a widower and his only daughter. In all around this little habitation, might be seen traces of the hand of woman in ornaments and graces, for Catherine Haydon was never idle ; and a thousand memorials of a cheerful and happy spirit, rejoiced the heart of her father. But old Haydon was of a stern and grave character, and shewed but little outward signs of his joys or his sorrows.

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"Catherine sat in the little parlour, her eyes fixed on her work, which it would seem from the frequent breaking of her thread, she was plying with great diligence ; opposite to her sat a young man, who appeared to be waiting for an answer to something he had said. Catherine at length, after having become more and more hurried, laid down her work, and fixing her eyes mournfully and earnestly on her companion, spoke in a low and hesitating voice ;—'Dear Charles I do not want any evidence to convince me of the truth of what you say ; but my father thinks you have become irregular, and you know his blunt manner of speaking ; believe me Charles there are not any of your friends that feel a more lively interest in your welfare than I do.' 'It does not seem so,' said the young man, 'when I meet with nothing but censure and rebuke.—If you too desert me, I shall have little motive for amendment.' So saying, he arose, and making a cold and distant obeisance he left the room. Catherine looked after him a moment, and then hiding her face in her hands she wept. They were almost the first tears of bitter grief that had sullied her eyes, and she felt like one that could not be comforted.

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"As Charles turned from the garden-door, he was accosted by his friend Stevenson, or *old Steve* as he was more commonly called. 'Where now, my lad,' said the latter, 'I neither know or care'—said Charles gloomily

'Well,' said Old Steve, 'I am going to a free and easy at the Fighting Cocks, there will be glorious singing, Old Watty Simpson is president, and it will be all right.'—Old Steve gave a chuckle of delight as he thought of it; and seized the arm of Charles, for in truth he was glad of a support. A life of libertinism had left him 'old and surfeit swelled'—he hobbled along beside his manly and graceful companion, and stood in the comparison as unsightly a monster as a man could be.

"The club-room of the 'Fighting Cocks' was prepared for the revel of the Sons of Apollo, as the members of Watty Simpson's free-and-easy modestly called themselves. That worthy himself had taken his seat at the head of the table, and seemed as grave and important as if he were presiding at a conclave of cardinals.

"The Sons of Apollo must have degenerated since the days of Anacreon, for this veteran was a most ungodly looking personage: his face swelled beyond its natural proportions by habitual inebriety, was covered with purple blotches, his light and fish-like eyes were dull and unmeaning, except when he was excited by liquor, when they swam and twinkled like a dying lamp; his head shook with self-induced palsy, as he adjusted his spectacles to muster his band. At this moment Old Steve and Charles entered, and their number was complete. Old Watty now rose, with an intention of saying what he termed 'something neat,' 'Gent:' said he, 'I say gent: I have had the honour—yes, gent: I say the honour of sitting in this chair for twenty years—yes gent: I have been in your service twenty years. 'Tis true I have lost many a fine fellow; but I am still stout and hearty.'—The harangue of the worthy President was interrupted by a fit of coughing, that well-nigh suffocated him. The Sons of Apollo raised a cheer that almost shook the house to the foundation, and drowned the cries of the miserable old man, who in vain attempted to restore silence. Indignant at this contempt of his authority, he gave one

shrill scream that rose above the clapping hands and jingling glasses, and then sunk powerless in his chair. His hand was extended on the table, his jaw fell upon his breast, his eyes were sunk and closed,—he had burst a blood-vessel. The noise was hushed and the revellers gazed in horror-struck silence on the awful visitation.

"He was borne from the room, and Old Steve took his place; their callous indifference then returned, a song was volunteered, and in a few minutes Old Watty was as much forgotten as if he never had existed. He well knew the heart of man who says, "there is no love among the wicked." As the debauch proceeded, the laughter became louder and more frequent, what was said became oftener misunderstood; many apologies were offered and received, and momentary harmony was restored. The candles flared, the room was filled with smoke, every man began to urge his separate claim to the attention of the company; when Old Steve rose, and striking on the table, rang a hand-bell. Silence was accorded,—broken only by an occasional hiccough, or an attempt to rise by some worthy, who thought he was called upon to speak or sing. 'Gent:' said Old Steve, 'this is the very witching time of night, and we must have fresh lights and more liquor, for it is not late.—Altho' it is 12 o'clock, it is not twelve a-piece yet.'

"This piece of wit was honoured with a cheer, after which Old Steve gave the song of 'One bottle more.' As this sound reached the ears of those half a-sleep, they roused up and joined the chorus. When order was called, all was silent except Charles and a young man about his own age; they had drawn their chairs a little from the table, and were arguing in deep and earnest anger. Charles was now quite drunk, and his face was flushed and his brow contracted with a fierce and lowering frown, foreign to the natural cheerful and open expression of his countenance, and sadly unlike him, who among his com-

panions had been called the *peacemaker*. Old Steve however would be obeyed, and insisted on their shaking hands; a desire with which they most emphatically complied:—they joined their hands, and clasped them it would seem more as a remembrance of their quarrel than as a peace-offering. This was quite sufficient for the company.—What did they care how far they were reconciled, if their orgies were undisturbed by the quarrel.

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"The sun rose high and bright over the steaming abominations of the modern Babylon.—Drunkenness and his grim companion murder slunk away. The room where the overnight carousal was held, presented an altered scene; the dim and long-wicked candles were streaming on their stands, and contrasted shockingly with the bright day-light which broke through an open shutter. A table and seats were overset, and broken drinking-vessels scattered around, gave evidence of an affray; but all the disputants had departed, save one who was in the 'strict arrest' of death.—There dashed on the floor lay the antagonist of Charles. The life-giving beam of the morning shone in vain upon his livid face, his eyes were started from their sockets, his blue lips parted over his clenched teeth, and shewed the rage that had possessed his bosom before the mortal agony of death;—a knife stood buried to the haft in his breast. At the head of the body on the floor sat an elderly female, her face hid between her knees. She raised her head from time to time and looked into the dead-man's countenance, as if to be assured of the horrid fact; and then sunk again into speechless grief. One of the city-watch was also in the room, to prevent the removal of the body, until an inquest had decided the manner of death; but he, long hardened by similar scenes was fast asleep, and the widowed mother might be said to watch alone beside her murdered son."

When Claude had proceeded thus far a young Londoner chimed in with "That ere is being too hard on a free and easy for I knows"—"Silence you cat faced lubber," said the boatswain, "is that your mamers to cross the course of a story ?" Claude proceeded—

"It was a fine morning in the spring, when old Haydon sat in his garden with his daughter.—It had cost him a struggle to forbid her intimacy with Charles, and tho' he still loved him better than he acknowledged to himself, he could not bear the idea of her being the wife of a man who had become a professed libertine. Still his heart was pained as he saw her pale and settled countenance.—She was still as busily employed as ever ; but there was no song heard now in the cottage of Haydon ; the favourite gray linnet stretched in vain, and listened for the notes he was wont to emulate.—As she now sat sewing, the old man regarded her earnestly. At this moment a little dog came into the garden, and creeping close to Catherine, and looking wistfully in her face, laid himself down with a low whine at her feet. It was Charles's favourite dog Fidele ; she took no apparent notice of it, but in a moment or two after, her face sank down, and tears fell fast upon her hands.

"Old Haydon resumed the perusal of a newspaper he had been reading ; a paragraph met his eye coupled with the name of Charles. As he proceeded he breathed heavily. 'Unfortunate man !' he said.—'Who, dear father?' said Catherine. 'Charles is'—'what ?' said she, starting on her feet. '*A murderer !*' She heard no more, but sank on the ground in that kind insensibility that blunts for a time the sense of affliction. The old man bore her into the cottage, and threw himself on his knees beside her, the most miserable father in the wide British empire.

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"At the summer assizes for 18— the name of Charles

Wilson appeared in the calendar, indicted for murder. The judges were seated, and the pale eager faces of the lawyers, shewed that their harvest was come ; they sat noting their briefs and snapping at each other, as if preparing for the keen encounter of their wits, which was about to commence. The prisoner was in the dock.—The change of years seemed to have passed over his blighted form ; shrunk from his fair full proportion, his eyes fixed and lustreless. He had been previously arraigned. The trial commenced, and the first witness was called—it was old Stephenson. He drew his bloated carcase through the crowd, and stood before the court. When he had faltered over the oath, the prisoner fixed his eyes on him with a withering expression ; even the callous heart of the old dotard felt the mute appeal.—The forms of many like the present victim, ruined by his evil companionship, rose before his mind's eye, and he gasped and trembled. His evidence, and that of one or two more established the fact. The Judge summed up the case, and urged the fact of seizing a knife from the table and stabbing the deceased.—He ended the short recapitulation and bowed to the Jury, who drew together for a moment, and then—the foreman announced the verdict of GUILTY !

" The eyes of the spectators were turned to the prisoner,—he stood silent and motionless ; and then came the awful question—whether he had ought to say, why the sentence of death and execution should not be pronounced upon him ? The answer that was to doom and divide him from the living, hung for a moment upon his lips.—At length he replied, 'I have nothing to say.' The Judge rose, and placing the black cap on his head, addressed the convict.—' Unfortunate young man, painful is the task that duty compels—to draw from before your eyes, the scenes of that world which you have scarcely entered. I hope this moral warning will not be lost ; that men will

consider before they render up their reason to the demon of intoxication, in that state they are still responsible to the law, and it is no plea or excuse, when it leads to crime. Unfortunate prisoner, I will not trespass on the moments that divide you from the grave, nor add reproach to the awful penalty you are about to pay.'—The sentence of death and the short prayer for mercy followed. As he pronounced the words 'Lord have mercy on your soul,' there was a shuddering movement in the dense crowd, and a deep Amen rose from among them.

"All was now finished, except that last scene of degradation and suffering, that was to lay this involuntary felon in an early and dishonoured grave.

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"In the autumn of the same year I stood before the house of old Haydon ; more than the desolation of that leafless period hung around it. The garden gate was thrust half open, the hinges rigid with disuse ; the woodbine broken from its trelissed support, hung round the porch which was filled with withered leaves : the rolling stone lay buried in weeds, while as if in contempt of the old adage, moss had gathered on it, and a spider had drawn its web through the handle ; the cage of the linnett was cast broken on the ground, and a gaunt and wild looking cat sat on its former stand. The door opened, and old Haydon came forth. The moon which had risen very bright shone on his figure : he was no longer erect, but moved towards the gate with uneven steps.—It might be truly said in the words of the patriarah, that his grey hairs were bending in sorrow to the grave.

"Behind him came Fidele ; the little dog crept along as if he knew he was the companion of sorrow. The old man passed on, and took his path to the neighbouring church-yard of St. ****.—It seemed a well-accustomed walk, for he did not look up but passed over the stile, and entered the mansion of the dead. He crossed to an

obscure corner, and uncovering his head, knelt down by a small newly-laid marble tablet, it bore the simple inscription—

CATHERINE HAYDON,
ETAT 20.—REQUIESCAT IN PACE.

"When the wine was pour'd at that festive board,
And the joyous revel made;
Was pleasure ought more deeply bought,
Or a darker forfeit paid."

When he had concluded, "Oh!" said the boatswain, "them sort of twisters about churchyards and all that sort of thing, makes me as squalmish as a marine; (so saying he gave a sigh like the blast of a forge bellows)—but stop my hearty, you shall have a snifter for your pains." So saying he went below, and brought up a flask secured round his neck by a lanyard. "Now my boy, here is a drop of stuff that never saw the face of cold water, or the dipping stick of an exciseman."

"He smuggled the stuff, and I know it," half said and half sung the carpenter. When a toothful was handed to Claude, he declined it. "Give it to me," said Ellwood eagerly, "and I'll sing you 'Hearts of Oak' to cure the boatswain's qualms." "Do my hearty, and thankie," said the sailor, "and I dont mind if I tell you about the fitting of the Mary Dunn of Dover." "Ay do," said several of the crew, "for that's a regular crammer, we'll chorus the song after."

"Upon my veracity," said the boatswain, "its as true as I'm telling it to you, the Mary Dunn of Dover was built in the good ould time, she was the biggest ship as ever carried a keel; when she stood round the Lizard onced, the fly of her ensin' swept a thousand sheep off the land's end. Her hands entered for seven years, and when they went aloft to reef topsails, their time was within three weeks of being out before they got down. There was a man had a brother aboard, and he was three years

in the craft afore he could light on him;—and where do you think he got hail of him at last? why the chap as he was looking for belonged to the fourteenth mess in the skysail truck. The skipper of her used to ride about the decks on a donkey, and it took him three days to go forard to hail the hands to hoist the jib—" When he had got thus far in this veracious description, the ship's captain called through his trumpet. " All hands, reef topsails"—the boatswain instantly thrust the bottle into his breeches, and repeated the command, " All hands reef topsails, ahoy!" in a voice that made the rats in the hold fly to their deepest hiding places; and then blew on his call a summons so shrill, that it would have turned the edge of a butcher's cleaver.

A few days after the ship's stewart was called on by a number of idlers, to read a story he had promised them: he produced a black letter volume, entitled, " Tales of the Wars of the League," and read from it the following legend:—

THE EXPRESS.

" Moments like to these
Read men's lives into immortalities." —BYRON.

" The inhabitants of the imperial city of Vienna were assembled to see the troops of the empire pass in review —the vast army was drawn up in masses on a plain, still and motionless; the approach of the emperor was announced—a single trumpet sounded—then an hundred voices gave the word to prepare.—There was a momentary and glittering movement in the serried ranks—the banners were lifted and danced gaily in the wind—a forest of spears and lances were upreared,—and swords rushing from their sheaths, as if with living instinct, flashed back the sunbeams in a thousand hues. Then all was still, not a sound betrayed the bounding of a thousand ardent and fiery spirits, which composed that gallant host. The emperor and his splendid cortege advanced to the centre,

where the banner of the empire spread its ample folds—then the grand salute was given, swords and banners dropped to the ground, and the martial music struck up with a triumphant swell. The monarch rode forward uncovering his head, and bending to his saddle bow, received with 'proud humility' the allegiance of his gallant army. The spectacle now proceeded, and as the different divisions of the army wheeled slowly past, there was none claimed such general admiration as the Hungarian hussars.—They were the flower of that gallant nation, and were led by the bravest and most chivalrous of its nobles. As they passed, the emperor spoke to an old field-marshall at his side—'young Mansfeldt is a gallant boy, and will do honor to his noble house.' 'Ay sire,' said the general, 'well fit to lead those wild-fire hussars, he has done good service at their head in Lithuania.' 'I have not forgotten said the emperor,' bowing graciously.

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"At the imperial levee that followed, young Mansfeldt was received in a manner, that gave much cause for surmise as to what new honor was intended him. Honored by his sovereign and affianced to one of the fairest of the beauties of the German court, graced with military renown, and beloved by all, he might be said to be one of the happiest of mankind, as he was one of the noblest and bravest.

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"At the period of which we speak, the government expresses were conveyed to all parts of the empire, by couriers stationed along the roads for that purpose two at each station. Midway between the capital and the fortress of Lichenwald, which was then used as a state prison, lived Bons Van Halen, the jolly host of the Black Eagle, he was the imperial post-master and inspector of the royal couriers; the two who were stationed at his house were called Runwede and Leopold. About three

months after the review, the Courier Leopold was seated on a bench in the porch of the inn, whilst Marinett the daughter of the host bathed his ancle, which was bruised and swollen; her mother Ursula stood by rating him in no very measured terms. 'Your neck is the next joint you will break you sot.—I promise you the Provost of Lichenwald shall deal with you.—I wish I could write and the emperor should know the doings of his couriers; ay and the inspectors too,' said she, darting an angry look at Van Halen, who stood inside the door with that timid look of resignation, common to confirmed sots.

"At this moment, Runwede who had been at Lichenwald with a dispatch from the capital, rode to the door, and dismounting sat down on the bench and sighed heavily. 'Give me some drink' said he 'for I have heavy news,' the inmates of the inn gathered round him. 'Ay' said the courier 'it is too true, the noble Count Mansfeldt is condemned to death, he dies at sunrise to-morrow.' The Governor of Lichenwald shook his head when he saw the three black seals on the express I brought; 'but give some drink Marinett, for I am as thirsty as the Baltic-ocean.' 'Be moderate to night good Runwede' said the maiden, 'for Leopold is lame and cannot ride; and if an express comes you must bring it on.' 'Hush girl' said the courier, 'if I have double work I must have double drink. Why I have ridden over lipp and lian when I was as drunk as a state-counsellor.' A party of Pomeranian carriers now arrived, and Runwede soon forgot that he might be obliged to ride at a moment's notice in darkness over the worst road on the banks of the Rhine.

"The sun which the gallant Mansfeldt was to see rise but once more, had long descended, when Marinett called hastily to her mother. 'What shall we do; there is an express coming from Vienna, there is a light at Wedburg to warn us to be ready, and Runwede is so drunk he cannot sit on his horse.' The shrill voice of Ursula now

assailed the slumbering courier. 'Rise boot and saddle thou lumbering hundsfoot.' Runwede roused by her exclamations, started up. 'What' said he again, 'there is no rest for man or beast in this cursed service; but I will be ready directly;' so saying, he turned in his bed and snored again. The angry Ursula now entered his chamber, and dragging the reluctant messenger from his bed, bestowed cuffs and kicks on him with such hearty good will that he at length arose and prepared for the road. 'Haste haste' said Marinett from below, 'the horse is ready, and I hear the other coming up the hollow-way;' Runwede got to the door and climbed heavily into his saddle, the fresh air restored him to momentary, consciousness, and he sat waiting for the coming express. In a moment after, the Vienna courier dashed to the door, his horse covered with foam—he unslung the dispatch bag from his neck, and saying 'to Lichenwald with speed,' gave it to Runwede, who stooping forward dashed his spurs into his horse and was gone in a moment. 'Thank God it is gone on' said the Vienna courier, 'for it is a message of mercy, it is a reprieve for the Count Mansfeldt.' Marinett sighed deeply as she looked at her mother, for she knew the life of the gallant noble hung by a hair; depending on the most faithless of mankind—a DRUNKARD.

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"The Count Mansfeldt sat in a guarded chamber of the fortress attended by a chaplain, who exhorted him in a low and earnest voice, to lay aside his worldly thoughts. The young man was leaning back in a chair, his eyes were closed, but not in slumber; the visions of the past were busy in his mind, and his features showed the struggle of that waking dream. The morning gun boomed heavily through the vaulted galleries, Mansfeldt started and looked wildly around: his hour was come. He collected his firmness, and stood awaiting the messengers of

death ; they came with slow and heavy steps, the governor entered first and stood looking at his prisoner in mournful silence. 'I know the time is come' said Mansfeldt, 'and before my tongue is silent for ever, bear witness to the declaration of my innocence. The treason if such it be that I am charged with, was committed when I had indulged in wine, until my reason had become obscured ; my tongue bore evidence against myself, and has ruined my name, and forever stained the honor of my ancient house. But at this last hour believe me no disloyal thought ever entered my breast. Let my countrymen take warning of me, and reform this national reproach, it unmans the soldier and betrays the patriot, breaks the bond of social union, and the ties of love.' His voice faltered—the governor turned away his face and waved his hand, the Count bowed, and the procession commenced.

"The garrison had formed a hollow square, their faces were moulded into that stern sadness, which is above the weakness of tears. The Count and his escort advanced, his sword was borne before him—they halted ; the Count advanced and stood alone, the sentence of the court that tried him and the royal order for his execution were read. The commander of the troops, a tall gaunt old man, came forward to perform the ceremony of breaking his sword ; as he took it in his bony and shrivelled hands, he shook with a visible tremor : he raised the weapon, and suddenly bending the blade, it flew in glittering fragments on the ground—no unfit emblem of the transient glory of its master. The brow of the prisoner flushed, and a groan escaped him.

"The firing party and their victim alone occupied the space, and a dead silence ensued ; he glanced his eyes to where the look out was stationed : he had a lingering hope of mercy, but the officer looked through his glass with correct attention : no horse or man appeared in

view. The governor advanced and took the hand of the Count, he pressed it in silence. A black bandage was then bound on his eyes, he knelt on the ground, the chaplain joined his hands over him and then retired. The governor looked again to the signal tower, but there was no change; he covered his face, waved his hand and turned away. The party levelled their pieces—the signal fell—the sharp volley followed; the Count sprang on his feet, and making a motion as if drawing his sword, fell dead.

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"A party of the Hungarian hussars spurred along the road to Lichenwald with fiery haste; their leader bore a full pardon for the Count Mansfeldt, and they gave the rein to their horses with right good will. At a turn in the road they found a horse grazing with gored sides and a broken rein; a little farther lay his late rider, the drunkard Runwede, dead and mangled; he had been dragged in his stirrup, and the uprooted shrubs and grass which he had uptorn in his progress, showed the struggle he had vainly made for life. As they recognized the royal courier, and found the express yet unopened, they knew that speed would not save their gallant chief; and slowly and mournfully they pursued their way to Lichenwald.

"Thus, by a vile passion led,
His life the sottish Runwede gave;
And gallant Mansfeldt's blood was shed,
On a dishonoured grave."

When he had concluded, the carpenter remarked, "That's wot comes of sending messengers by lubberly horsemen; if that ere letter of advice for the saving of the poor gentleman's life had been sent by a smart boat, it would have come in time, I'll warrant me." "Strike the bell, and call the watch," said the mate. This operation broke up the party.

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After a rather tedious passage; the fleet arrived at Kingston. The Troops were disembarked, and lodged in Barracks; their first care was to examine their new island as they were pleased to term it. To Claude every thing was new; the land, the sea, the people were different from any thing he had seen; and he felt that wild throb of pleasure, which arises from novelty. While he looked round him in pleased perplexity, he saw amongst the persons who were employed in giving over barracks to the new comers, the identical old man who had given him the advice in the cathedral of St. Paul's. "Do you not know me?" said he, going up to him. "No, my lad," replied the old man. "I saw you first," said Claude, "in St. Paul's in London." "Oh, I remember," said the other, extending his hand; "you look well in the King's uniform. I am busy now, getting your regiment into their barracks, and have not been long here myself, being appointed Barrack Serjeant on this station; I will be very glad to see you to-morrow—any one will show you where I live." Claude now went in search of Ellwood, whom he found in the Canteen, with several soldiers of the regiment they came to relieve. He was singing in great glee when Claude entered. The old stagers were swarthy merry looking fellows, delighted with the idea of going home. They asked a thousand questions, each seeming to think affairs stood in England just as they left them years ago. One of them offered a tott of rum to Claude, but Ellwood whispered, "its no go, he does'nt take any hard stuff." "Well" said the entertainer, "I must get him some sangaree." Claude found this an agreeable drink; the bustle, and novelty of the scene, made him forget the caution he had hitherto observed, and he soon became too happy to notice the quality or quantity of what he drank. As a set off against the singing abilities of Ellwood, the entertainers produced a fellow who had been a strolling player. This worthy was

too far gone for any scenic attempt, he however commenced—

"'Free is his heart who for his Country fights, (hiccups)—
He on the eve of battle can resign himself to social pleasure,
Sweetest then (hiccups) when danger to the soldier's soul endears,
The human joy that never may (staggers) return.'

"You must excuse me comrades, I can't come it at present." "Go it Jack," roared all hands. "Its a fine thing," whispered the person who sat next Claude; "only he's a little cut at present--he's been in a real playhouse in his time." The Kean of the —th regiment was completely beat, and tumbled forwards at his length on the floor. The noise and confusion increased, and Ellwood among the rest sank to sleep. Claude still retaining his senses, went in search of the barrack serjeant; but he had not gone far in the open air, when his brain reeled, and he sunk on the ground.

Claude did not awaken to consciousness until the morning of the following day; he felt a burning thirst, his eyes were swollen, and fiery red, his head was as heavy as if it were a stone; and when he moved, his temples throbbed as if they would burst. Ellwood who was watching him, brought a vessel of water; he drank eagerly, and felt relieved. "I thought you would never come to," said Ellwood; "I have been all right these three hours; take a hair of the dog that bit you." So saying, he offered him a bottle, but the strong flavour created a horrid feeling of nausea. One of the — regiment who stood by, proposed his taking some bitters, "They are an excellent thing to strengthen the stomach," said this kind adviser. He accordingly mixed some snake-root, lemon juice and rum; Claude drank it, and felt enlivened. After some time he went in search of the barrack serjeant, whose house stood in a little grove of trees. The old man received him very coolly; desired him to sit down on a bench in the veranda, and asked, "How do you like

Kingston?" Calude hesitated, and replied, "I have not seen much of it." "No—I suppose not, you were too drunk last night."—Claude started—"Yes, and you have been making the beginning usual in this country, of drinking in the morning. (Claude was about to speak)—I know what you would say, excuses will not repair this; look at that grave yard—(he pointed to a place at a short distance)—look at that grave yard, (continued he); see how close the head boards stand; more than half of these people have come to an untimely end through this vile habit. Think whether you will abandon it or not. No half measures will do. If you are willing to give up this cursed thing, I will be your friend as far as a poor maimed old man can be; if not, let me never see you again; for I could not bear to look on you dying by inches. Think of it, and touch no intoxicating drink until I see you again." He went into the house, shut the door, and left Claude more mortified and ashamed, than he had ever before been. When he returned to barracks, he told Ellwood the whole affair. "Well," said the latter, "I hope you have more spirit than to take that old fool's advice; as for me I can always take care of myself." "But" said Claude, "I think I *shall* take his advice, I am sure it cannot be safe to drink in this climate." While they were speaking, several of their companions of the night before, came and proposed going to the Canteen for various reasons. One was a little in the blues; another had the horrors downright, having been as he expressed it, *beastly* the night before; another had been on duty, but was now willing to give the new comers a drop of the best in the island. Ellwood accepted the invitation, and looked at Claude, who shook his head. Ellwood took him aside—"What," said he, "will you offend the strange regiment? I don't know what to say of your not coming." Claude paused for a moment; as he turned, the white grave stones met his eye, and fixed his reso-

lution. He replied, "Say what you please, I do not go." Ellwood turned muttering away, the only words that could be distinguished were "fool," and "coward." As he made this explanation to the party in waiting, they went off with a loud laugh. It grated harshly on the ears of Claude, but he bore it and conquered.

The comrades were divided for a short time, Ellwood being sent on detachment to a place at some distance. When they were about to part, "My dear fellow," said Claude, "mind what I have said to you; you have got into disgrace, and are already accounted a drunkard. "What, schooling me again?" said Ellwood pettishly; "I tell you there is more friendship in a pint of rum, than in a churn of buttermilk." On these terms they parted; Claude, from being regular in his habits, respectful in his conduct, and punctual in the obedience of orders, became much liked, and as far as his situation allowed, trusted with things that required diligence and activity. He got about this time what is termed the first step to a general officer—being made Lance Corporal, and though not of a vain temper, he found himself casting sundry glances at the arm which wore the new ornament. The day he was placed on this first step on the ladder of advancement, he went to see the barrack serjeant, who was now his chief friend and adviser. The old man was very sprucely dressed, and was reading an account of the earlier campaigns of the war. "Well done, my boy," said he, "perhaps you may live to be a field marshal. This is the glorious day of *Vemiera*. [He pointed to his hat, which was adorned with a sprig of laurel]. See, here I am in print;" he read as follows:—"'The left wing of the gallant — regiment maintained the hill until the flank of the enemy was turned; their loss amounted to thirty one killed, and forty wounded—one serjeant severely.' That was *myself*," said the old man, drawing himself up, and waving the stump of his arm to and fro with great satisfaction.

"Aye, and after that, I was in a French prison four years and one hundred and twelve days, and got all my back pay and clothing, and eight pounds, three shillings and twopence halfpenny farthing, smart and prize money.—But I have some good news for you, there is an assistant wanted in the general Hospital, and I have spoken to the staff surgeon about you,—I told him you had been a sort of a doctor's mate, and he will ask the Colonel's leave for you to go. The Doctor will do any thing for me; we were in a French prison together. The gentlemen who were prisoners used to give Bill Owens and me many a bottle of wine, to sing them 'Rule Britannia,' and such like, it used to keep up our hearts, and vex the frog-eating rascals of Frenchmen who guarded us."

Claude obtained the situation, and found the observation of his old friend to be just; for half of at least the diseases were caused or rendered incurable by intemperance. About this time he got a letter from Ellwood. It was written after a fit of illness, and during one of those paroxisms of remorse to which drunkards are subject, but we give his own words—

"Dear Comrade,—This comes to inform you that I am well, that is, not exactly *well*, but getting well of a fever which brought me very low, I had a dream during my sickness, or something like a dream, I have put it into a rhyme for you.

MIDNIGHT.

"Twas at deep midnight, calm and dead,
No life sound thro' the silence broke,
Save my own footsteps' measured tread,
When thus my inward spirit spoke:

"O, would I had my native wings!
I grieve that I am leagued with thee;
For by-gone time ill omen brings,
Of what the future yet may be.

"When first thy infant tongue could bless,
Those joys that time cannot encrease,
Thy ways were truth and pleasantness,
And all thy paths were peace.

"But evil with thy stature grew,
And wild misrule stain'd many a day;
Then they who lov'd thee—ah, how few!
Wept as they turn'd away.

"Now from within thy callous heart,
I raise a voice of wail and dread:
I loathe to stay—cannot depart,
Where shall I last be led!

"When life is o'er, thy time-worn dust,
Shall back to kindred earth return;
I—forfeit of thy broken trust,
Shall for uncounted ages burn.

"More than the finite lapse of time,
That thou canst think, or feel, or know:
I—victim of thy every crime,
Shall, like the potter's furnace glow.

"Oh, think on an immortal's fate,
How bright, how happy I may be;
Think on the trust—how rich, how great,
That has devolved on thee.

Joe Peters says it is not good grammar or good verse, but 'tis just as I thought of it. Yours,

H. Ellwood."

Time passed on, for three years "'Twere long to tell and sad to trace" how Ellwood became more and more debased. He was often unfit for his duties; the forbearance of his superiors was exhausted; every sort of punishment was inflicted on him; and he became at length a confirmed and habitual Drunkard. His fine voice became broken; he no longer bore away the prize in the

race ; nor led up the merry dance ; his gait was unsteady, his look timid, his demeanour a strange contrast of wild excitement and miserable despondency. The passion for drink had swallowed all that "was lovely and of good report," it was like the daughter of the horse leach still crying, "give, give ;" altho' it had devoured his health, and reputation and was fiercely preying on his life. He was frequently an inmate of the Hospital, and Claude exhausted on him all his modes of persuasion and entreaty in vain. He would indeed for a time become moderate, but returned to his old course with increased avidity. He became at length useless to the service, and was marked to be sent to England as an invalid. Thus the Comrades parted never to meet again. He arrived at Chatham in a shattered and feeble condition. When his parents heard of his arrival, they came to see him accompanied by the still faithful Mary. Before they had reached the ward's of the Hospital at Fort Pitt, they met the surgeon under whose hands he was ; and old Ellwood requested his opinion of his son's case—"The climate of that dreadful island has murdered him," said he.—The surgeon beckoned the old man into an office, where he opened a book, "Look here," said the officer, "I will not flatter you with hopes for his life"—(in the book opposite the name of Henry Ellwood was written in red ink—"of confirmed intemperate habits.") "For a case like this there is no hope. When this evil brings its aid to the diseases of tropical climates, the efforts of the doctor's cannot save, or even prolong life."—Old Ellwood groaned.

When the party entered the ward, Henry Ellwood half rose from his bed. But the hand of death was heavy on him and he sunk back again. His eyes however for the moment sparkled, and his face flushed with some resemblance to his former beauty ; but the pallid hue of disease and death soon settled on his brow. Mary and his mother sat down on each side of him and took his

hands ; his father stood at the foot of the narrow bed looking on his dying son. "I am glad to see you," said the invalid feebly, "for I am near my end ; Mary I release you from your engagement, I hope you will find a husband more worthy of you ; I am dying, the victim of my own miserable folly, justly punished for preferring to those that loved me, the company of the heartless, the vicious, and the idle. I am very faint, I feel heavy—do not leave me—father—mother,—Mary—oh my God ! His eyes closed for a moment, and then opened, glazed in the gaze of death.

He was gone, and we will not even in idea follow him into Eternity. What would it avail to depict the hopeless grief of the little group. It would be but drawing one solitary instance from the great mass of human desolation and misery which is daily occasioned by the same deadly vice ; which parches the hearts of the brave, perverts the gifts of genius ; sinks the man beneath the brute on earth, and incurs the penalty of an eternity of woe, which leaves behind only a blotted memory, and an awful but alas, too often a fruitless example ! ! !

Several years after the death of Eliwood, the old Barrack Serjeant returned to Europe. He was sitting on the porch seat of the church of the village of ***** in the west of England, his old companion Bill Owens was beside him. He pulled out a London Paper which had just come by post—"Read the Army news" said Bill. He read for a few moments, and then suddenly springing up exclaimed, "bravo ! bravo ! my own boy"—the passage was from the London Gazette to the following effect. "—— Regt. Serjeant Major Claude Irvine to be Quarter Master, vice Jones, deceased." "Now Bill, that was all my doing—I set that boy on his legs, I'll tell you how I came to leave off drinking myself.—When we lay at Whallie Camp in Essex, there was an order for us to go to ——" at this moment a pack of hounds came running

past at full cry, which spoiled the beginning of the old man's story—and finishes mine. * * *

"Farewell—so ends the Comrades tale ;
A different lot their fortunes bear—
Think not the moral trite or stale,
That bids you ALL BEWARE."